

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 /086 W
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P R 271533Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8425
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 3845

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PL
SUBJ: HUNGER STRIKE ANNOUNCED: RAPID GOVERNMENT REACTION

REF: WARSAW 3643 AND PREVIOUS

1. ON MAY 26, ELEVEN PEOPLE WHO BEGAN A HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST REGIME BEHAVIOR FOLLOWING THE JUNE, 1976, PRICE-RISE DISTURBANCES RELEASED A STATEMENT TO THEIR SPOKESMAN, WIEZ EDITOR TADEUSZ MAZOWIECKI, AND TO WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS. THE STATEMENT IS DIRECTED TO THE POLISH COUNCIL OF STATE, THE POLISH EPISCOPATE, THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, AND PUBLIC OPINION. IT SAYS THAT THE STRIKE, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH, WARSAW, FROM MAY 24 UNTIL MAY 31, WAS CHOSEN AS "THE MOST PROPER AND UNDERSTANDABLE WAY TO POINT OUT THE DANGER AND THE DEEPLY IMMORAL CHARACTER OF THE VIOLATION OF AND DISRESPECT FOR HUMAN

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DIGNITY, RIGHTS, AND FREEDOMS." REFERRING TO THE EXAMPLES OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, AMONG OTHERS, THE SIGNERS OF THE STATEMENT SUMMARIZE THEIR OBJECTIONS TO THE REGIME'S TREATMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATORS FOLLOWING THE DISTURBANCES. THEY SPECIFICALLY MENTION THE FIVE DEMONSTRATORS WHO REMAIN IN PRISON, AS WELL AS THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE WHO ARE IN JAIL AND THREATENED BY "YET ANOTHER TRIAL OF INNOCENT

PEOPLE."

2. ON MAY 27, THE MAJOR POLISH DAILIES TRYBUNA LUDU AND ZYCIE WARSZAWY CARRIED EDITORIALS BY PROMINENT JOURNALISTS DOMINIK HORODYNSKI AND ADAM WYSOCKI, CRITICIZING THE WARSAW STRIKERS. THE THEMES OF BOTH EDITORIALS ARE SIMILAR: A SMALL GROUP OF ANTI-POLISH ACTIVISTS HAVE SEIZED UPON A PRETEXT TO EXPLOIT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS AND TO TROUBLE THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING THEIR OWN ENDS. THESE "PECULIAR" ENDS, SAYS HORODYNSKI, ARE SOMETIMES FOUNDED ON LITTLE MORE THAN "FRUSTRATION, NARCISSISM, AND SIMPLE PATHOLOGICAL THIRST FOR NOTORIETY."

3. AN EPISCOPATE OFFICIAL TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE EXPECTED THE CHURCH WOULD MAKE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE HUNGER STRIKE. HE SAID THAT ANY COMMENTARY WOULD MORE LIKELY BE EXPRESSED IN A SERMON BY CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI. "THEY (I.E., THE STRIKERS) ARE THERE BECAUSE EVERYONE IS ALLOWED ACCESS TO THE HOUSE OF GOD," HE SAID.

4. COMMENT: THE UNUSUALLY RAPID OFFICIAL REACTION TO THE HUNGER STRIKE IS A SIGN OF DEEP CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUATION OF THE TENSION WHICH BEGAN WITH THE DEATH OF STANISLAW PYJAS (REF). THE REGIME IS MOVING QUICKLY IN AN EFFORT TO BLOCK THE FIRST PUBLIC ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE. ON ITS SIDE, THE EPISCOPATE IS KEEPING ITS DISTANCE FROM THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND REACTING WITH CAUTION. END COMMENT.
DAVIES

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